

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-15 AF-10 AID-20 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-19 DRC-01

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R 031820Z OCT 73

FM AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0649

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USUN NEW YORK 0026

UNCLAS STRASBOURG 145

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, COE

SUBJECT: HIGHLIGHTS OF GOLDA MEIR'S PRESS CONFERENCE IN
STRASBOURG

1. SUMMARY. AT HER PRESS CONFERENCE IN STRASBOURG ON OCTOBER 2, ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER GOLDA MEIR CONTINUED TO HAMMER ON THE VIENNA INCIDENT TAKING A STRONG CRITICAL LINE ON THE AUSTRIAN DECISION AS SHE HAD THE DAY BEFORE TO EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARIANS AT THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE. SHE ALSO AMPLIFIED HER EARLIER REMARKS ON ISRAELI POSITIONS VIS-A-VIS THE ARABS AND TREATED SEVERAL ISSUES NOT TOUCHED BEFORE THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY. PRESS REPORTS TO THE CONTRARY, HOWEVER, LOCAL OBSERVERS SAY THAT SHE DID NOT CONCIOUSLY HINT AT A NEW US INITIATIVE IN THE WAKE OF THE VIENNA EVENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. AMPLIFYING HER EARLIER REMARKS, MRS. MEIR SUGGESTED THAT JORDAN WAS THE LOGICAL PLACE FOR PALESTINIANS TO LOCATE AND THAT JORDAN COULD ITSELF BECOME THE NUCLEOUS OF A PALESTINIAN STATE, WHATEVER NAME THE ARABS MAY DECIDE
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TO GIVE IT. REGARDING THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, SHE SAID

THAT PRESENT GOVERNMENT POLICY IS TO STRICTLY CONTROL THE OWNERSHIP AND PURCHASE OF LAND. ON EFFORTS TO NEGOTIATE A SETTLEMENT, SHE STRESSED THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION, FAVORING THE FORMER, AND, CITING THE AMERICAN EXPRESSION "DO IT YOURSELF", SHE CALLED FOR A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS OF THE MIDDLE EAST BY THOSE LIVING THERE.

3. IN REPLY TO PERSISTENT QUESTIONS, ON THE DELICATE ISSUE OF FRENCH ATTITUDES TOWARDS TERRORISM AND ISRAEL, MRS. MEIR NOTED THAT RELATIONS WITH FRANCE HAD BEEN BETTER IN THE PAST. SHE WAS HOPEFUL THEY WOULD IMPROVE AND THAT FRANCE WOULD APPROACH THE MIDDLE EAST WITH "GREATER OBJECTIVITY". IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ON WHY SHE WAS NOT STOPPING IN PARIS, MRS. MEIR COMMENTED THAT THIS HAD ALSO BEEN THE CASE DURING HER VISIT TO FRANCE IN MAY AND THAT IT WAS, OF COURSE, THE PRIVILEGE OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT TO INVITE OFFICIALLY TO FRANCE WHOMEVER THEY PLEASED.

4. REGARDING THE VIENNA INCIDENT, MRS. MEIR STATED THAT THERE WAS "NO PROOF" THAT THE SOVIET UNION WAS INVOLVED. IN REPLY TO A SOMEWHAT LOADED QUESTION FROM TERRENCE SMITH (NYTIMES) REGARDING US INVOLVMENT, THE PRIME MINISTER REPLIED EMPHATICALLY THAT SHE DID NOT KNOW OF ANY SUCH INVOLVEMENT. SHE ALLOWED, HOWEVER, THAT THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN COMMUNICATIONS OF WHICH SHE WAS NOT AWARE. SHE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT, WHILE ISRAEL WOULD BE HAPPY WITH DIRECT FLIGHTS FOR SOVIET JEWS BETWEEN THE USSR AND ISRAEL, THIS DEPENDED UPON THE USSR. WOODS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STRASB00145
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: STRASBOURG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731052/aaaabmif.tel
Line Count: 90
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: willialc
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24-Oct-2001 by thigpegh>; APPROVED <01-Nov-2001 by willialc>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HIGHLIGHTS OF GOLDA MEIR'S PRESS CONFERENCE IN STRASBOURG
TAGS: PFOR, COE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005